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Kittredge, Jonathan

An address upon the effects of ardent spirits

Concord [N.H.]

1827

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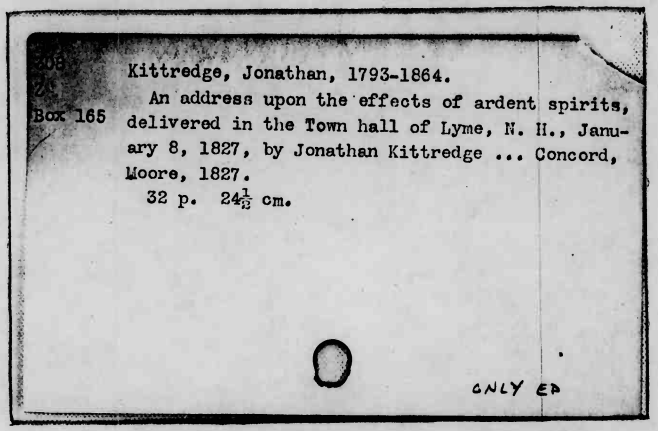
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An address upon the effects of ardent spirits, delivered in the Town hall of Lyme, N. H., January 8, 1827, by Jonathan Kittredge ... Concord, Moore, 1827.
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MR. KITTREDGE'S

ADDRESS

UPON

THE EFFECTS OF ARDENT SPIRITS.

AN

ADDRESS

UPON

THE EFFECTS OF ARDENT SPIRITS,

DELIVERED IN THE TOWN HALL OF LYME, N. H.

JANUARY 8, 1827.

By JONATHAN KITTREDGE, Esq.

"O! thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee——Devil." *Shakspeare.*

"Taste not, touch not, handle not."—*Paul.*

Published by the Lyme Association for the promotion of temperance.

Concord:
PRINTED BY JACOB B. MOORE.
1827.

tions. The object is not, particularly, to reform the intemperate, but to prevent the growth of another race to fill their places, and in the next generation, if possible, to render them extinct.

January, 1827.

ADDRESS.

Fellow Citizens,—That intemperance, in this part of the country, is a great and growing evil, all are ready to admit. When we look abroad and examine into the state of society, we find the number of those, who are in the constant and habitual practice of an excessive use of ardent spirits, to be alarming. We see the effects, that they produce among our friends and our neighbors, but the evil is so common, and it is so fashionable to drink, and, I had almost said, to drink to excess, that the sight of it has lost half its terror, and we look upon an intemperate man without those feelings of disgust and abhorrence, which his real situation and character are calculated to produce. This is the natural result of things. The mind becomes familiar with the contemplation, the eye accustomed to the sight, we pay but little attention to the object, he passes on, we laugh at the exhibition, and grow callous and indifferent to the guilt. Our pity is not excited, our hearts do not ache at the scenes of intoxication, that are almost daily exhibited around us. But, if for a moment we seriously reflect upon the real situation of the habitually intemperate, if we call to mind, what they have been, what they now are, if we cast our eye to the future, and realize, what in a few years they will be,

if we go further, and examine into the state of their families, of their wives and their children, we shall discover a scene of misery and wretchedness, that will not long suffer us to remain cold, and indifferent, and unfeeling.

This examination we can all make for ourselves. We can all call to mind the case of some individual, whom we have known for years, perhaps from his infancy, who is now a poor, miserable drunkard.—In early life, his hopes and prospects were as fair as our's. His family was respectable, and he received all those advantages, which were necessary, and which were calculated to make him an useful, and respectable member of society. Perhaps he was our school-fellow, and our boyhood may have been passed in his company. We witnessed the first buddings of his mental powers, and know that he possessed an active, enterprising mind. He grew up into life with every prospect of usefulness. He entered into business, and for a while he did well. His parents looked to him for support in old age, and he was capable of affording it. He accumulated property, and, in a few years, with ordinary prudence, and industry, would have been independent. He married, and became the head of a family, and the father of children, and all was prosperous and happy around him. Had he have continued as he began, he would now have been a comfort to his friends, and an honor to the community. But the scene quickly changed. He grew fond of ardent spirits. He was seen at the store, and the tavern. By degrees he became intemperate. He neglected his business, and his affairs

went to gradual decay. He is now a drunkard. His property is wasted, his parents have died of broken hearts, his wife is pale and emaciated, his children ragged, and squalid, and ignorant. He is the tenant of some little cabin, that poverty has erected to house him from the storm, and the tempest. He is useless, and worse than useless, he is a pest to all around him. All the feelings of his nature are blunted; he has lost all shame; he procures his accustomed supply of the poison that consumes him; he staggers through mud, and through filth to his hut; he meets a weeping wife, and starving children, he abuses them, he tumbles into his straw, and he rolls, and foams like a mad brute, till he is able to go again. He calls for more rum, he repeats the scene from time to time, and from day to day, till soon his nature faints, and he becomes sober in death.

Let us reflect, that this guilty, wretched creature had an immortal mind—he was like of us, of the same flesh, and blood, he was our brother; destined to the same eternity, created by, and accountable to, the same God, and will, at last, stand at the same judgment bar; and who, amid such reflections, will not weep at his fate, whose eye can remain dry, and whose heart unmoved?

This is no picture of the imagination. It is a common and sober reality. It is what we see almost every day of our lives, and we live in the midst of such scenes, and such events. With the addition, or subtraction of a few circumstances, it is the case of every one of the common drunkards of Lyme. They have not completed the drama, they

are alive, but they are going to death with rapid strides, and their predecessors have already gone. Another company of immortal minds are coming on to fill their places, as they have filled others.—The number is kept good, and increasing. Shops as nurseries are established in every town, and neighborhood, and drunkards are raised up by the score. They are made, they are formed, for no man was ever born a drunkard, and, I may say, no man was ever born with a taste for ardent spirits. They are not the food which nature has provided. The infant may cry for its mother's milk, and for nourishing food, but no one was ever heard to cry for ardent spirits. The taste is created, and in some instances may be created so young, that, perhaps, many cannot remember the time when they were not fond of them.

And here, permit me to make a few remarks upon the formation, or creation of this taste. I will begin with the infant, and, I may say, that he is born into rum. At his birth, according to custom, a quantity of ardent spirits are provided, they are thought to be as necessary, as any thing else.—They are considered as indispensible, as if the child could not be born without them. The father treats his friends, and his household, and the mother partakes with the rest. The infant is fed with them, as if he could not know the good things he is heir to, without a taste of ardent spirits. They are kept on hand, and often given to him, as medicine, especially where the parents are fond of them themselves. By this practice, even in the cradle, his disrelish for ardent spirits is done away. He

grows up, and during the first months, or years of his existence, his taste, and his appetite are formed. As he runs about, and begins to take notice of passing events, he sees his father and his friends drink. He partakes, and grows fond of them. In most families, ardent spirits are introduced and used on every extraordinary occasion. Without mentioning many, that the knowledge and experience of every man can supply, I will instance only the case of visitors. A gentleman's friends, and acquaintances call upon him. He is glad to see them, and fashion, and custom make it necessary for him to invite them to the sideboard. This is all done in his best style, in his most easy, and affable manner. The best set of drinking vessels are brought forward, and make quite a display. The children of the family notice this, they are delighted with the sight, and the exhibition; they are pleased with the manners, and gratified with the conversation of the visitors on the occasion. As soon as they go abroad, they associate the idea of drinking together with all that is manly and genteel. They fall into the custom, and imitate the example, that is set them. Circumstances and situations expose one to more temptations, than the rest. Perhaps his resolution,or his moral principle, is not so strong, and, in this way, one out of twenty-five of those who live to thirty years of age, becomes intemperate. He becomes so not from any vicious principle perhaps, but is at first led on by fashion, and custom, and favorable circumstances, till at last he plunges headlong into the vortex of dissipation, and ruin. Our natural disrelish for ardent spirits is first

done away, a relish for them is then created. They next become occasional, next habitual drinks.—The habit gains strength, till, at last, the daily drinker is swept away by the first adverse gale. It is on this principle, and let the fact operate as a caution to those who need it, that many men of fair unblemished characters, who have made a temperate, but habitual use of ardent spirits in days of prosperity, have, on a change of fortune, become notorious drunkards; while those who have refrained in prosperity, have encountered all the storms of adversity unhurt. We frequently hear a man's intemperance attributed to a particular cause, as loss of friends, loss of property, disappointed love or ambition, when, if the truth were known, it would be seen, that such men had previously been addicted to the use of ardent spirits, perhaps not immoderately, and fly to them on such events, as their solace, and support. Intemperance requires an apprenticeship, as much as law, or physic, and a man can no more become intemperate in a month, than he can become a lawyer, or a physician in a month. Many wonder, that certain intemperate men of fine talents, noble hearts, and manly feelings, do not reform, but, it is a greater wonder that any ever do. The evil genius of intemperance gradually preys upon the strength of both body, and mind, till the victim, when he is caught, finds, that, although he was a giant once, he is now a child. Its influence is seductive and insinuating, and men are often irretrievably lost, before they are aware of it. Let them beware, how they take the first step. It is by degrees that men become intemperate. No man ever became so all at once.—It is an impossibility in the nature of things. It requires time to harden the heart, to do away shame, to blunt the moral principle, to deaden the intellectual faculties, and to temper the body. The intemperance of the day is the natural, and legitimate consequence of the customs of society; of genteel and respectable society. It is the common, and ordinary use of ardent spirits, as practised in our towns and villages, that has already peopled them with drunkards, and which, unless checked, will fill them with drunkards. The degree of intemperance that prevails, and the quantity of ardent spirits used, in our most respectable towns, is almost incredible. Perhaps some facts on this subject will be interesting.

As it regards the degree of intemperance, that prevails, it may be safely said, that one out of an hundred of the inhabitants of this part of the country, is a common drunkard. By a common drunkard, is meant one, who is habitually intemperate, who is often intoxicated, and who is restrained from intoxication, neither by principle or shame. Of such there are from ten to twenty and upwards in every town. There is another class which is intemperate, and many of them are occasional drunkards. This class is more numerous, than the former, and one out of about forty of the inhabitants, belongs to one or the other class. Is not this a horrid state of society? But any one can satisfy himself of the truth of the statement, by making the examination himself.

The quantity of ardent spirits, yearly consumed in our towns, varies from six to ten thousand gallons. It will answer the argument, I intend to draw from it, to state the annual quantity in this town, to be six thousand gallons; although it is short of the truth. This would be three gallons to every inhabitant, or twenty one gallons to every legal voter. The cost of this liquid, at the low price of fifty cents per gallon, will be three thousand dollars, which will pay all your town, county, and state taxes three years, and is as much, as it costs you to support, and maintain all your privileges, civil, religious, and literary. In one hundred years you would drink up all the town in ardent spirits, or it would cost just such a town as this, with all your farms, stock, and personal property, to furnish the inhabitants with ardent spirits, at the present rate of drinking, only one hundred years. But should the town continue to drink, as they now do, for fifty years, and should, in the mean time, suffer the cost of the spirits to accumulate, by simple interest only, the whole town, at the end of the term, could not pay their rum bills. It can be no consolation, that all other towns would be alike insolvent.

But this is not all. Add to this sum, the loss of time, and the waste of property, independent of its cost, occasioned by it, and it swells the amount to a monstrous size. Here you have an account of the cost of ardent spirits, calculated on a scale within bounds. At present, there is a great complaint about the pressure of the times, and the

complaint is doubtless well founded. Hard times is in every body's mouth; but, if you had for the last year, only abstained from the use of ardent spirits, you would now have been independent and easy in your circumstances. Three thousand dollars, which you have paid for them, divided among you, would pay all the debts, you are called upon to pay. I do not mean, that no one wants more than his proportion of this sum, but there are some who want none of it, and who would circulate it by loan, or otherwise, among those, who do want it, and it would relieve the whole town from the distress, they are now in.

If this town had an income, that would pay all its taxes, you would consider it, a matter of great joy, and congratulation. But if, it had an income, that would discharge all its taxes, and that each man, instead of paying, should receive the amount he now pays, you would consider your situation highly prosperous, and enviable. Discontinue the use of ardent spirits, and you have it. Use none, and your situation, as a town, will be as good, yea far better, than if you had an income of three thousand dollars, yearly, to be divided among its inhabitants.

If we carry this calculation further, we shall find on the principle adopted, that there are, in the state of New-Hampshire, two thousand four hundred and forty-one common drunkards, and three thousand six hundred and sixty-three intemperate, or occasional drunkards—in the whole, six thousand one hundred and four. The state consumes seven hundred and thirty two thousand four hundred and

eighty-three gallons of ardent spirits, annually, which cost, at fifty cents a gallon, three hundred and sixty-six thousand two hundred and forty-one dollars. In the United States, there would be ninety-six thousand three hundred and seventy-nine common, and two hundred and forty thousand nine hundred and forty-nine common and occasional drunkards. That the United States consume annually twenty-eight millions nine hundred and thirteen thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven gallons of ardent spirits, which cost, at fifty cents per gallon, fourteen millions four hundred and fifty-six thousand nine hundred and forty-three dollars, as much, as it costs to support the whole system of our national government, with all that is laid out in improvements, roads, canals, pensions, &c. &c., and is more, than one half of the whole revenue of the Union, for the last year. It must be remembered, that this calculation embraces only the quantity and cost of the spirits, and is on the supposition, that Lyme c nsumes only six thousand gallons, at fifty cents per gallon, and is a fair criterion for the state and nation. As it regards the state, it would be safe, nearly to double the quantity and to treble the cost of the spirits, and, as it regards the nation, it would be safe to double all my calculations. In the United States, the quantity of ardent spirits yearly consumed, may be fairly estimated at sixty millions of gallons, the cost at thirty millions of dollars, and the number of drunkards, of both kinds, at four hundred and eighty thousand.

But we all know, and it is common to remark, that the cost of the article is nothing; that it hard-

ly makes an item in the calculation of pernicious consequences resulting from the introduction of ardent spirits. Were we to embrace the usual concomitants, and estimate the value of time lost, the amount of property wasted, of disease produced, and of crime committed, where ardent spirits are the only cause, it would transcend our conceptions, and the imagination would be lost in the contemplation. The number of drunkards in the United States, would make an army as large as that with which Buonaparte marched into Russia; and would be sufficient to defend the United States from the combined force of all Europe. Convert our drunkards into good soldiers, and one tenth of them would redeem Greece from the Turk.—Convert them into Apostles, and they would christianize the world. And what are they now? Strike them from existence, and who would feel the loss? Yes, strike them from existence, and the United States would be benefitted by the blow.

But this is not half. I cannot tell you half the effects of ardent spirits. And yet ardent spirits are said to be useful, and necessary. It is false.—It is nothing but the apology that love of them renders for their use. There are only two cases, in which Dr. Rush says, they can be administered without injury, and those are cases of persons like to perish, and where substitutes may be applied of equal effect. What rational man would use them, for the sake of these two possible cases? As well might he introduce rattlesnakes among his children, because their oil is good in a disease, with which they may possibly be afflicted.

The number of deranged persons in the United States, I do not know. Probably there are several thousands, and it is ascertained, that one third of those, confined in the Insane Hospitals of Philadelphia, and New-York, are rendered insane by the use of ardent spirits. Yes, one third of the poor, miserable maniacs of our land, are made such by the use of that, which in the opinion of some is a very useful, and necessary article, and which they cannot do without. This article has deprived one third of the crazy wretches of our land, of their reason, of that which makes them men, of the very image of their God.

Out of the number of the intemperate in the United States, ten thousand die annually from the effects of ardent spirits. And what a death! To live a drunkard is enough, but to die so, and to be ushered into the presence of your angry Judge, only to hear the sentence, "Depart thou drunkard!" Ah! language fails, and I leave it to your imaginations to fill up the horrid picture.

This death happens in various ways. Some are killed instantly, some die a lingering, gradual death, some commit suicide in fits of intoxication, and some are actually burnt up. I read of an intemperate man, a few years since, whose breath caught fire by coming in contact with a lighted candle, and he was consumed. At the time, I disbelieved the story, but my reading has since furnished me with well authenticated cases of a combustion of the human body from the use of ardent spirits. Trotter mentions ten such cases, and relates them at length. They are attended with all the proof, we

require to believe any event. They are ~~attended~~ attested by living witnesses, examined by learned men, and published in the journals of the day without contradiction. It would be unnecessary to relate the whole, but I will state one of them, and from this, an idea can be formed of the rest. It is the case "of a woman eighty years of age, exceedingly meagre, who had drunk nothing, but ardent spirits, for several years. She was sitting in her elbow chair, while her waiting maid went out of the room for a few moments. On her return, seeing her mistress on fire, she immediately gave an alarm, and some people coming to her assistance, one of them endeavored to extinguish the flames with his hands, *but they adhered to them, as, if they had been dipped in brandy or oil on fire.* Water was brought and thrown on the body in abundance, *yet the fire appeared more violent, and was not extinguished, till the whole body had been consumed.*— The lady was in the same place, in which she sat every day, there was no extraordinary fire, and she had not fallen."* This, with nine other cases, related by the same author, was a consumption of the body produced by the use of ardent spirits. The horror of a drunkard's death beggars description. Need I point to yonder grave, just closed over the remains of one, who went from the cup of excess to almost instant death. You all know it.

But this is not all. One half the poor, you support by taxes, and individual charity, are made poor by the use of ardent spirits. This has been demonstrated by actual enquiry, and examination. In

* Trotter on drunkenness, pp. 78, 79.

the city of New-York, where there are more poor, and where more is done for them, than in any other city of the United States, a Committee appointed for the purpose, ascertained by facts, that more than one half of the city poor were reduced to poverty by intemperance. This is also the case throughout the Union. And, here, permit me to state a case, with which I am acquainted. I do it with a double object. I do it to shew, that the use of ardent spirits produces poverty, and distress, and the disuse of them restores to wealth, and com fort.

A gentleman in the city of New-York, who carried on ship building, on an extensive scale, and employed a great number of hands daily, and paid them all in the same manner, and nearly to the same amount, was struck with the difference in their situations. A few, and only a few were able from their wages to support their families; but these were out of debt, and independent in their circumstances. They always had money on hand, and frequently suffered their wages to lie in the hands of their employer. The rest were poor, and distressed, and received frequent visits from the sheriffs, and constables, and were obliged to call for their wages, as fast as they earned them, and often to anticipate their pay. The latter were always poor, and harrassed, the former easy and comfortable in their circumstances, and he resolved, if possible, to ascertain the cause of the difference. On enquiry, and examination, he found, that those of them who were above board, used no ardent spirits, while the others were in the constant and daily use of them. He satisfied

himself, that this use of ardent spirits was the only cause of the difference in their condition. He determined, if he could, to prevail upon them all to abstain altogether from their use. On a thorough, and parental representation of the case to them, he succeeded, and they all agreed to make use of none for a year. At the end of the year, they were all, to a man, out of debt, had supported their families in better condition, had done more work, destroyed fewer tools, and were hearty, and robust, and enjoyed better health. This fact speaks volumes, and needs no comment. Adopt the same practice in this town, and the result will be the same.— What! drink none? Yes, I say, drink none. One gallon for the town of Lyme, per annum, is just four quarts too much. In addition to the miseries of debt, and poverty, which they entail upon a community, they are the parent of one half the diseases that prevail, and of one half the crimes, that are committed. It is ardent spirits, that fill our poor houses, and our jails. It is ardent spirits, that fill our penitentiaries, our mad houses, and our state prisons; and it is ardent spirits, that furnish victims for the gallows. They are the greatest curse, that God ever inflicted on the world, and may well be called, the seven vials of his wrath.— They are more destructive in their consequences, than war, plague, pestilence, or famine, yea, than all combined. They are slow in their march, but sure in their grasp. They seize not only the natural, but the moral man. They consign the body to the tomb, and the soul to hell.

While on earth, the victim of intemperance is as stupid as an ass, as ferocious as a tiger, as savage as a lion, as poisonous as the asp, as filthy as the swine, as fetid as a goat, and as malignant as a fiend. No matter what may be the original materials of the man. His figure may possess every grace of the sculptor. His mind may be embued with every art and science. He may be fit to command at the head of armies, to sway a Roman senate, to wield the destinies of nations. His heart may be the seat of every virtue; and ardent spirits will strip him of the whole, and convert him into a demon. Need I tell how? Need I point out the change, that ebriety produces, in the moral and social affections? Need I present the sword red with a brother's blood? It was in a drunken revel, that the infuriate Alexander slew his best friend, and most beloved companion Clytus. And it was in a drunken revel, that he proclaimed himself a god, and died.

But have not ardent spirits one good quality, one redeeming virtue? None. I say none.—There is nothing, not even the shadow of a virtue, to rescue them from universal, and everlasting execration. But they are good, as a medicine. No, not as a medicine. There is no physician, that does not love them, that needs them in his practice. There is no disease, that they cure, or relieve, that cannot be cured, or relieved, without them. They add to no man's health, they save no man's life.* It is impossible to name a single good

* The writer is aware, that spirits or alcohol, are necessary in some preparations of the chymist and apothecary. But it is the use of them as drinks, which he is combatting, and

thing, that they do. Give them to the Divine.—Do they add to his piety, to his zeal, to his faithfulness, to his love of God, or man? No, they destroy them all. Give them to the Physician. Do they increase his skill, his power to discriminate amid the symptoms of disease, his judgment to apply the appropriate remedies, his kind and affectionate solicitude? Nay, verily, they destroy them all. Give them to the legal advocate. Do they increase his knowledge, his perceptions to discover the points of his case, his readiness to apply the evidence, his ability to persuade a court and jury? No, they destroy them all. Give them to the mechanic. Do they assist his ingenuity, his judgment, or his taste? No, they destroy them all. Give them to the labourer. Do they add to his strength? Do they enable him to bear fatigue, to endure heat and cold? Can he do more work, or do it better? No, they are the ruin of the whole. They reduce his strength, weaken his frame, make him more susceptible to the heat, and cold, and disorganize the whole system of his labor.

But there are some men, you say, who use ardent spirits, and who get along very well. Admitted. They endure it. So there are some men who get along very well, with poor health, and feeble constitutions. Are poor health, and feeble constitutions, therefore, no evils? Is the prosperity of

which he is assured, by respectable physicians, are not only unnecessary, but hurtful, in sickness, and in health. Were they to exist only in the apothecary's shop, in the state of alcohol, it would be all that the world needs of them. Some physicians, nevertheless, may think them useful in two or three cases, or conditions of the body, but it is apprehended, that, if they should discontinue the use of them altogether, except in certain tinctures, &c. they would be as successful, as they now are. They are often used, where they would not be, if they were not the most common thing, that could be found.

such to be attributed to them? As much, as is that of the former to the use of ardent spirits. Was ever a man made rich by the use of ardent spirits? Never, but millions have been made beggars by it.

Yet some say, they feel better by drinking ardent spirits. Let us examine this excuse. It is nothing but an excuse, and he, who loves rum, and is ashamed to own it, says, he feels better to drink it. Let us inquire how. Are they conducive to health? On this subject, let the Physician decide. One, as great as this country has produced, Dr. Rush, says, that the habitual use of ardent spirits, usually produces the following diseases: A loss of appetite; sickness at the stomach; obstructions of the liver; jaundice, and dropsy; hoarseness, and a husky cough; which often ends in consumption; diabetis; redness, and eruptions of the skin; a fetid breath; frequent and disgusting belchings; epilepsy; gout, and madness. This is the train of diseases, produced by the use of ardent spirits, and they are the usual, natural, and legitimate consequences of their use. And now I ask, can that, which, of its own nature, produces these diseases, make a man feel better? Reason might answer; and were she on her throne, uninfluenced, and unbiassed by the love of ardent spirits, she would unequivocally, answer no. And we find, that those who say they feel better to drink ardent spirits, are those who are in perfect health, but love rum, and it gratifies their appetite, and this is what they mean by feeling better.

I will examine, for a moment, the effect, the immediate effect, of ardent spirits upon the man. I will take a man in health, and give him a glass of ardent spirits. The effect is to produce derangement, and false notions, and conceptions. But one glass will not have much effect. I will give him another, and, if he loves rum, he feels better; another, and he feels better; another, better yet. By this time, he has got to feel pretty well, quite happy. He has no fear or shame. He can curse, and swear, and break things. "He is fit for treason, stratagems, and spoils." He fears no consequences, and can accomplish impossibilities. If he is a cripple, he fancies he can dance like a Satyr; if he is slow and unwieldy, he can run like a hart; if he is weak, and feeble in strength, he can lift like Sampson, and fight like Hercules; if he is poor, and pennyless, he is rich as Cræsus on his throne, and has money to let. This is all a correct representation. It is what happens universally with the drunkard. I know one man, who is intemperate, who is poor and never known to have five dollars at a time, who, when he is intoxicated, has often, and does usually offer to lend me a thousand dollars. Poor, miserable, and deluded man. But he feels well, he is one of those, who feel better to drink. He is deranged, his imagination is disordered. He fancies bliss, and felicity, and plenty, and abundance, which do not exist, and he awakes to misery, and poverty, and shame, and contempt. Yet this is the exact feeling of all those who feel better to drink spirits. He who drinks but a

glass, has not the same degree, but precisely the same kind of feeling, with the one I have described.

And this is all—this is all, that rum does, to make a man feel better. If his wife and children are starving, he feels it not. He feels better. If his affairs are going to ruin, or are already plunged into ruin, he is not sensible to his condition. If his house is on fire, he sings the maniac's song, and regards it not. He feels better.

Let him, who likes this better feeling, enjoy it. Enjoy it, did I say? No. Reclaim him, if possible. Convince him, that he labours under a delusion. Restore him to truth, and to reason; banish the cup from his mouth, and change the brute into the man.

And now need any more be said, to persuade mankind to abandon the use of ardent spirits?—The appalling facts in relation to them, are known to all. Experience, and observation teach us, that they are the source of ruin, and misery, and squalid wretchedness, in a thousand shapes. They are the three headed monster; they are the Gorgons with their thousand snakes; their name is Legion. And shall I yet find advocates for their use? will this enlightened community yet say, they are useful and necessary? All those who have used them, and discontinued the use of them, say they are totally unnecessary and useless. We see, that those who live without them, enjoy more happiness, and better health, than those who use them—that they live longer lives. But oh! the folly, the stupidity, and the delusion of rum drinkers!

But perhaps it may be said, that the effects, and consequences, that I have mentioned, result from the abuse, and not from the proper and moderate use of ardent spirits; and that, on many occasions, in small quantities, they are useful. Let us examine the circumstances, and occasions, when they are said to be necessary, and perhaps I cannot do it better, than in the words of another.

"They are said to be necessary in very cold weather. This is far from being true; for the temporary heat, they produce, is always succeeded by a greater disposition in the body to be affected by cold. Warm dresses, a plentiful meal, just before exposure to the cold, and eating occasionally a cracker, or any other food, is a much more durable method of preserving the heat of the body in cold weather." In confirmation of this, the case of the vessel wrecked off the harbour of Newburyport, a few years since, may be adduced. On an intensely cold night, when all the men of that vessel were in danger of freezing to death, the master advised them to drink no ardent spirits. He told them, if they did, they must surely freeze. Some took his advice, while others, notwithstanding his most earnest entreaties, disregarded it. The result was, that of those who used the spirits, some lost their hands, some their feet, and some perished; while the rest survived unhurt.

"They are said to be necessary in very warm weather. Experience proves, that they increase, instead of lessening the effects of heat upon the body, and thereby expose to diseases of all kinds. Even in the warm climate of the West-Indies, Dr.

Bell asserts this to be true. Rum, says this author, whether used habitually, moderately, or in excessive quantities, always diminishes the strength of the body, and renders man more susceptible to disease, and unfit for any service, in which vigour or activity is required. As well might we throw oil into a house, the roof of which was on fire, in order to prevent the flames from extending to its inside, as pour ardent spirits into the stomach, to lessen the effects of a hot sun upon the skin." And here permit me to add, that they are said to be necessary in cold weather, to warm, and in warm weather, to cool. The bare statement of the argument in these two points confounds itself.

"Nor do ardent spirits lessen the effects of hard labour upon the body. Look at the horse, with every muscle of his body swelled, from morning till night, in a plough, or a team. Does he make signs for a glass of spirits, to enable him to ~~draw~~ the ground, or climb a hill? No, he requires nothing, but cold water, and substantial food.—There is no nourishment in ardent spirits. The strength they produce in labour, is of a transient nature, and is always followed by a sense of weakness and fatigue."*

Some people, nevertheless, pretend, that ardent spirits add to their strength, and increase their muscular powers; but this is all a delusion. They think they are strong, when they are weak. Rum makes them boast, and that is all. The truth is, it weakens them in body, but strengthens them in imagination. Why was Sampson forbidden by the

*Dr. Rush.

Angel of God to drink either wine, or strong drink, but to increase, and preserve his strength? When you hear a man telling how strong rum makes him, you may be sure, he is weak, both in body and mind.

There is one other occasion for using ardent spirits, which it will be proper to examine. They are said to be necessary to keep off the contagion of disease, and are recommended to attendants upon the sick. But the united testimony of all Physicians proves, that the intemperate are first attacked by epidemic disorders. This is universally the case in the southern states, and in the West-Indies. Experience also proves, that those attendants upon the sick, who refrain from the use of ardent spirits, escape, while those who use them, are swept away. If facts could convince, the use of ardent spirits would be abolished. But the love of rum is stronger on the human mind, than the truth of Heaven.

If, then, ardent spirits are not necessary in sickness; if they do not prevent the effects of heat and cold; if they do not add to our strength, and enable us to perform more labour; when are they necessary? Why, people in health say, they want to drink them now and then; they do them good. What good? If they are well, why do they need them? For nothing, but to gratify the taste, and to produce a feeling of intoxication, and derangement, slight in its degree, when moderately used, as they are by such people, but the character of the feeling is no less certain. It is the same feeling, that induces the drunkard to drink. One man

takes a glass to do him good, to make him feel better; another wants two; another three; another six; and by this time he is intoxicated, and he never feels well, till he is so. He has the same feeling with the man, who drinks but one glass, but more of it; and that man, who, in health, drinks one glass to make him feel better, is just so much of a drunkard; one sixth, if it takes six glasses to intoxicate him. He has one sixth of the materials of a drunkard in his constitution.

But it is this moderate use of ardent spirits, that produces all the excess. It is this, which paves the way to downright, and brutal intoxication. Abolish the ordinary, and temperate use of ardent spirits, and there would not be a drunkard in the country. He, who advises men not to drink to excess, may lop off the branches; he who advises them to drink only on certain occasions, may fell the trunk; but he who tells them not to drink at all, strikes and digs deep for the root of the hideous vice of intemperance. And this is the only course to pursue. It is this temperate use of ardent spirits, that must be discontinued. They must be no longer necessary when friends call, when we go to the store to trade, to the tavern to transact business, when we travel in the road, on public days,—in fact they must cease to be fashionable, and customary drinks. Do away the fashion, and custom, that attend their use, and change the tone of public feeling, so that it will be thought disgraceful to use them, as they are now used by the most temperate and respectable men; and an end is forever put to the beastly disease of intoxication. Let those, who cannot be

reclaimed from intemperance, go to ruin, and the quicker the better. I speak of the public good; but save the rest of our population; save yourselves; save your children. Raise not up an army of drunkards to supply their places. Purify your houses. They contain the plague of death; the poison, that in a few years will render some of your little ones, what the miserable wretches, that you see staggering the streets, are now. And who, I ask, would not do it? What father, who knew that one of his sons, that he loves, was in a few years to be what hundreds, you can name, are now, would hesitate to save him, to banish rum from his premises forever?

But, if all will do it, he is saved, and he who contributes but a mite in this work of God, deserves the everlasting gratitude of the Republic. If the names of a Brainard, of a Shultze, of a Buchanan, have been rendered immortal by their efforts to convert the heathen to christianity; the names of those men, who shall succeed in converting christians to temperance and sobriety, should be written in letters of ever-enduring gold, and appended by angels in the temple of the living God. The sum of their benevolence would be exceeded, only by his, who had no equal on earth, except him, who has no superior in Heaven. Then banish it. This is the only way to save your children. As long as you keep ardent spirits in your houses, as long as you drink it yourselves, as long as it is polite and genteel to sip the intoxicating bowl, so long society will remain just what it is now, and so long, drunk-

ards will spring from your loins, and so long drunkards will wear your names to future generations.—And there is no other way; there is no other way given under heaven, whereby man can be saved from the vice of intemperance, but that of total abstinence.

And, if ardent spirits are the parent of all the poverty, and disease, and crime, and madness, that I have named, and, if they produce no good, what rational man will use them? If he loves himself, he will not; if he loves his children, he will not; and as Hamilcar brought Hannibal, to the altar at eight years of age, and made him swear eternal hatred to the Romans; so every parent should bring his children to the altar, and make them swear eternal hatred to ardent spirits. He should teach them by precept and example. He should instil into his children a hatred of ardent spirits, as much as he does of falsehood and of theft. He should no more suffer his children to drink a little, than he does to lie a little, and to steal a little.

And what other security have you for your children? or for yourselves? Yes, for yourselves.—I knew a man, who, a few years ago, was as temperate as any of you, was as respectable as any of you, as learned as any of you, and as useful in life as any of you; I have heard him from the sacred desk, again and again, but by the same use of ardent spirits, that most men justify, and advocate, under the mistaken notion, that they were beneficial to him, he has at last fallen the victim of intemperance. And this is not a solitary example. I had almost said, it is a common example. I could add to the number.

And now what security have you for yourselves? You have none, but in the course that I have recommended. If it is necessary for the intemperate man, to write on every vessel, containing ardent spirits, "taste not, touch not, handle not," and to brand them, as full of the very wrath of God, it is also necessary for the temperate man, to do so, to save himself from intemperance.

But the difficulty on this subject, is to convince men of their individual danger, that intemperance stands at their own doors, and is knocking for an entrance into their own houses; that they, and their own children, are victims that he seeks.

But, if the places of the present generation of drunkards are to be supplied, whence will the victims come, but from your own children? And who knows, but that the infant, the mother is now dandling upon her knee, and pressing to her bosom, however lovely he may appear, however respectable and elevated he is, will be selected, to be one of that degraded, and squalid, and filthy class, that, in her old age, will walk the streets, as houseless, hopeless, and abandoned drunkards? You have no security, no assurance.

But we are apt to think, that the wretches, whom we see and have described, were always so; that they have not fallen; that they were out of miserable and degraded families; and that they are walking in the road, in which they were born. But this is not so. Among the number, may be found a large proportion, who were as lovely in their infancy, as promising in their youth, and as useful in early life, as your own children, and have become drunkards—

I repeat it, and let it never be forgotten--have become drunkards, by the temperate, moderate, and habitual use of ardent spirits, just as you use them now. Were it not for this use of ardent spirits, we should not now hear of drunken senators, and drunken magistrates; of drunken lawyers, and drunken doctors; churches would not now be mourning over drunken ministers, and drunken members; parents would not be weeping over drunken children; wives over drunken husbands; husbands over drunken wives, and angels over a drunken world.

Then cease. No longer use that, which is the source of infinite mischief, without one redeeming benefit; which has entailed upon you, upon your children, and upon society, woes unnumbered and unutterable. Banish it from your houses. It can be done. You have only to will, and it is effected. Use it not at home. Let it never be found to pollute your dwelling. Give it not to your friends, or to your workmen. Touch it not yourselves, and suffer not your children to touch it, and let it be a part of your morning and evening prayer, that you, and your children, may be saved from intemperance, as much as from famine, from sickness, and from death.

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